

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE GOVERNMENT  
ACCOUNTABILITY IMPROVES TRUST (GAIT)  
PROJECT

IMPLEMENTED BY CLUSA

(Cooperative League of the United States of America)

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## Executive Summary

This document embodies a final evaluation of the Government Accountability Improves Trust (GAIT) Project carried out in 10 of the 110 districts of the Republic of Ghana. The Upper Denkyira, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar and Dangme West Districts in southern Ghana were selected for the evaluation. Phase I of the GAIT Project was implemented in Ghana from 2001 to 2003. The first objective of the project is to address the challenges that exist in implementing the framework of political and economic liberalization in an enhanced democratic environment of Ghana through the involvement of civil society in governance. The second objective is to improve accountability, transparency and responsiveness in district assemblies towards the creation of a sustainable public service private sector partnership, on the other.

The evaluation process involved interviewing beneficiaries of the activities of the project such as district assembly officials, members of the civil society, visits to project sites, observation and collection of empirical data. The interviews were conducted through individual interactions as well as community meetings within a period of five days of field work.

Results of the evaluation clearly indicate that the project has met most of its objectives, though the extent of change is difficult to measure by the evaluation. Data point to increased involvement of civil society in governance at the local level in two of the three study districts. The findings also reveal that there has been a significant improvement in accountability, responsiveness and transparency in district assemblies. Significant improvements were found in Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts, the two districts that started implementing the GAIT Project in the first phase of the project in 2001, compared to the Dangme West District which began implementation of the project in January 2003.

The evaluation findings indicate also that the impact of the absence of a Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution component in the GAIT Project in certain parts of the districts where significant results had not been achieved due to the presence of sectoral tensions in the community. Furthermore, the findings revealed that in districts where there has been less political will in leadership at the District Administration, the project performance has been affected significantly, negatively, so to speak.

The team recommends that in the new phase of the project, which is GAIT II, CLUSA adopts a component of Conflict Prevention and Management Resolution (CPMR) in the project design, through which communities address situations of disputes. The central government should ensure the development of a mechanism that will generate sustainable political will at the highest level in Local Government Administration. In addition, there is also clear need for strengthening mechanisms for sustainability of the project which have been put up by civil society organizations in terms of human and financial resources. Lastly, more effort should also put in the districts that joined the project last year as there are clear gaps that need to be addressed such as in the area of conflict prevention as well as general understanding of the objectives of the project.

## ACRONYMS

CIP:	Community Initiated Project
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CLUSA:	Cooperative League of the United States of America
CPMR:	Conflict Prevention and Management
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
CU:	Civic Union
DA:	District Assembly
DCF:	District Common Fund
DG:	Democracy and Governance
DCE:	District Chief Executive
GAIT:	Government Accountability Improves Trust
GNAT:	Ghana National Association of Teachers
IFES:	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IGA:	Income Generating Activities
IGF:	Internally Generated Funds
IRP:	Internal Resource Person
LG:	Local Government
MP:	Member of Parliament
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
PM:	Presiding Member
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

# **Chapter 1 : Introduction**

## **1.0 Statement of the Problem**

Ghana was the first country, south of the Sahara, to gain independence from colonial rule on March 6, 1957 (Gadzekpo, 1997). Twenty-two of its 47 years of political history, had been under dictatorship of five military regimes (Okyere, 1997). Much of this period was marked by corruption and poor governance. One key feature of this situation was the breakdown of law, and apathy among citizens in participation in local governance. This resulted from the lack of trust in district level government, which in turn was due to the lack of accountability, transparency and responsiveness to issues advocated by citizens.

The genesis of the new dispensation of democracy can be traced to 1992 with the introduction of plural party system in Ghana, and the ushering in of the Third Republic.. Since that period there have been efforts to consolidate democracy and good governance in the country. Such efforts have included the enactment of legislative frameworks for political and economic liberalization which have not achieved much as a result of lack of implementation. The intervention of the United States government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the GAIT project is aimed at assisting the government and people Ghana to bring about transformation at the local level. This is with regards to active civil society participation in the shaping up of policies, decision making and management of public affairs as well as funds, in order to promote effective democratic governance.

From the foregoing, the project was therefore designed to at assist the government and local communities in the creation of a sustainable partnership between local government units for effective democratic governance through the provision of technical assistance involving the production models of local governance and demonstrating their value.

The CSOs involved in the project included community based enterprises and associations, youth associations, professional associations, religious groups, trade unions and local NGOs among others.

## **1.1 Geographic Operational Area of the Project and Implementation Agent**

Phase I of the GAIT Project was operational in 10 of Ghana's 110 districts in all 10 administrative regions of the country. The project was contracted to the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA).

Figure I: Map of Ghana showing the Three Evaluation Districts of Upper Denkyira, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar and Dangme West



## 1.2 Duration of the Project

The initial period of the project was from 2001 to 2003, but it was extended for another 18 months. A number of old districts which participated in the project were phased-out, while newer districts were enrolled in.

## 1.3 Objective of the Evaluation

This work is a final evaluation of the GAIT Project. The principal objective is to assess the degree to which institutional strengthening mechanisms influence CSOs in advocating issues that affect them to DAs and their participation in local government. The evaluation aims, also, to measure the response of government, in this case DAs, to issues advocated by CSOs and citizens at the local government level, resulting from the building the institutional capacity of the DAs. The results of the evaluation aim at focusing on the institution direction of the project which is now entering a second phase.



## 1.4 The Evaluation Questions

The following questions are raised in order to meet the objectives of the evaluation:

- i. Has the institutional capacity of CSOs and DAs changed since the implementation of the GAIT Project?
- ii. Have services provided by the CSOs to civil society, and advocacy changed for the better? Have services provided by the DAs to CSOs and civil society been improved?
- iii. Was the change in CSO services and advocacy a demonstrable result of change in the civil society institutional's capacity?
- iv. Has local government improved on its responsiveness to issues advocated by CSOs and citizens?
- v. Have DAs improved on their accountability and transparency?
- vi. Were mechanisms been put in place to ensure the gains of the Project were sustained after GAIT was phased-out?

## **Chapter 2 : The Evaluation Methods**

### **2.0 Introduction**

The methodology employed for this evaluation reflects the questions identified for investigation. Data elicited to answer the questions was qualitative in the main and a mix of content analysis of secondary documents, interview of key informants, group interviews and community meetings used. The target respondents for the exercise were CSOs, CUs, DCEs, beneficiary communities and CLUSA. Both structured and non-structured interview instruments were used. Observation methods complemented these instruments.

The beneficiary areas selected for the evaluation were the Upper Denkyira District, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District and the Dangme West District.

In Dangme West District, the target respondents were the Market Women Association, Ningo Prampram Advocacy Group, Lower Prampram Canoe Fishermen Association and the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT). The target respondents in the Upper Denkyira District were the Concerned Citizens Association, the Association of Civil Society Organisations, the Ghana Hairdressers and Dressmakers Association (GHABA) and the Kyekyewere Farmers' Association. In the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District, the Coaltar Women's Association, the Union of Professional Photographers, the Bisa Awurade Youth Association and the Associations of CSOs were interviewed.

### **2.1 Sampling Methods**

Purposive sampling methods were used in selecting the three survey districts of Upper Denkyira District, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District and the Dangme West District. Geographical proximity of these areas coupled with the time limitation for the fieldwork influenced the selection. To measure the differences in the impact of the GAIT Project in the districts, in addition, informed the evaluation team, in using the purposive sampling method: Both Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts enrolled on the GAIT Project in 2001 while Dangme West District enrolled in 2003.

The three CSOs and 10 CUs which participated in the evaluation exercise were randomly selected. The selection was based on the premise that each of the CSOs and CUs had been a beneficiary of the GAIT Project and thus, could respond to the issues identified as the evaluation questions.

A total of three CSOs each were interviewed in the Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts, while information was elicited from five others in the Dangme West District. The DCEs of the Upper Denkyira and Dangme West Districts were interviewed, while the District Coordination Officer stood in for the DCE in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District.

### **2.2 Data Collection**

Data collection was in the main, qualitative. As mentioned in the introductory part of this section, both structured and non-structured questionnaires were used to elicit data. Information from the DCE and DA officials, as well as the GAIT Project Facilitators in the three districts, was obtained

through the structured questionnaires. Though this instrument was originally planned to be self-administered, responses were obtained and recorded by the evaluators on a one-on-one basis. This approach was adopted due to time constraints on either side of the evaluating team and the target respondents. The approach, in addition, was to ensure efficient collection of information, create a forum whereby not-easily-understood questions could be clarified to respondents and forestall situations of call-backs if questionnaires had not been administered properly or filled. On average, the interviews with the DCEs lasted one and half hours each.

Information from CLUSA and the GAIT Project Facilitators was collected using group discussion techniques and structured questionnaire respectively. The session with CLUSA involved the leader of the project in Ghana, the project coordinator and the finance manager. CLUSA provided information essential for validating data enumerated from the field, while it illuminated additionally, challenges that tended to frustrate attaining all the objectives of GAIT within the planned project life-line.

The GAIT Project Facilitators provided information relevant to the evaluation questionnaires, through self-administered questionnaires. Questions listed in this instrument had the principal aim of illuminating various capacity strengthening strategies that GAIT had undertaken in the beneficiary districts and desired impact that these strategies could have registered at the time of the evaluation.

Other relevant information was elicited from the Facilitators through informal discussions and visits coordinated by the Facilitators for the evaluation team to project sites that had been initiated by both CSOs and the communities. These visits played the role of validating information that had earlier been provided to the evaluation team. Two of such community-initiated projects, a gari processing plant and a palm kernel extraction facility were visited in Oponso and Dunkwa in the Upper Denkyira District.

An interview guide was used during the community meetings. Based on information obtained at these sessions, probing questions that were not initially considered as part of the guide, but considered necessary to answering the evaluation questions were posed to the community. The duration of each community meeting was approximately two hours.

## **2.3 Data Processing: Content Analysis of Secondary Sources and Narrations**

A number of existing documents on the GAIT Project as well as literature on decentralization in Ghana were reviewed and analyzed as part of the evaluation. These information sources primarily provided essential input in writing the introductory components of the evaluation report. Second, analysis of the literature assisted in validating qualitative data that had been collected from the field.

## **2.4 Limitations to the Fieldwork/Lessons Learnt from the Fieldwork**

A couple of lessons were learnt from the fieldwork and are relevant to informing future exercises in evaluation. Though diverse in form, these lessons are principally time-related and tended to frustrate the schedule that had originally been planned for the fieldwork.

Appointments that had been made with the Kyekyerewa Farmers' Union and the Concerned Citizens Union had to be rescheduled to the following day first, because the former group could make transportation arrangements for the interview and second, the latter group did not have the relevant number of members that we could talk to.

The geographical distances between the three districts to a large degree, tended to put pressure on the evaluation team's efforts of collecting data from the planned evaluation sites. Interview sessions ended late in the afternoons and to meet appointments with the target groups in the other districts, the team traveled late and arrived at the destinations worn-out.

Other unforeseen delimiting factors that added to the afore-mentioned were the poor state of the roads to the rural communities in the Upper Denkyira District where interviews were held, as well as persistent rainfall that disturbed traveling in general.

## Chapter 3 : Summary of Evaluation Findings

### 3.0 Has the institutional capacity of CSOs and DAs changed since the implementation of the GAIT Project?

Findings of the evaluation point to improvement in the capacity of both CSOs and DAs after the implementation of the GIAT Project. Variations in the improvement, however, tended to exist among the districts with particular reference to the time the GAIT Project was implemented in the districts as well as the political commitment of the DCEs to their leadership responsibilities. Analysis of the data showed that districts that had long been engaged on the GAIT Project tended to have experienced an improvement in the institutional capacity of CSOs and DAs than districts which had a short engagement with the Project. Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts enrolled on the project in the first phase of its implementation, in January 2001 while Dangme West District enrolled in January 2003.

#### 3.0.1 Areas of Improvement in the Institutional Capacity of the CSOs and DAs

The three districts demonstrate improvement in the capacity which resulted from the training officials received in the following areas: Democracy and Good Governance, Budget Planning and Revenue Collection, Strategic Planning, Financial Management and Effective Communication.

Table 1 :Total Number of Capacity Building Training (CBT) By GAIT to the Three Districts in Sessions:2001 - 2003			
Benefits	Upper Denkyira	Dangme West	Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar
Leadership	2	-	2
Advocacy	1	-	1
Communication Skills	1	-	1
Proposal Writing	2	2	3
Citizen Participation in LG	1	-	1
Revenue Mobilization	1	2	1
Total	8	4	9

Source: Field Data Provided by the GAIT Facilitators

It is evident from Tables 1 (above) and 2 (below) that the CSOs in the selected districts, apart from the Dangme West, benefited from all the training modules organized under the GAIT Project. Table 1 reveal that the Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts benefited from a total of eight and nine training sessions respectively compared to four organized in the Dangme West District. A similar phenomenon in the number of trainings is evident in Table 2. The minimal number of training modules undertaken in the Dangme West District as of the time of the evaluation, is due to the late enrolment of the district on the Project. An examination of CSO records reveal that, the CSOs have written constitutions, an organizational prerequisite that most did not possess before GAIT; they develop their own business plans, most of the CSOs are registered. The various CSOs and their members, according to the respondents, have acquired

diverse skills that increase their awareness of their rights and how to exercise them and the empowerment to advocate issues that affect their respective members. Most CSOs and CUs understand how important activities need to be planned and prioritized, and have a general appreciation of project design.

The fact that the civic unions and CSO are involved in the process of fee fixing, for example, facilitated the mobilization of resources from the communities. Subsequent sections of the evaluation findings have data to substantiate this contention.

In spite of the observed changes in the institutional capacity of the CSOs and DAs, it needs reiterating the district variations in all three evaluation areas: Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts which were engaged with GAIT from 2001 had marked changes in the institutional capacity of both CSOs and DAs compared to Dangme West District that began the Project in 2003.

<b>Table 2: Total Number of Citizen Participation Techniques (CPT) By GAIT to the Three Districts in Sessions:2001 - 2003</b>			
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Upper Denkyira</b>	<b>Dangme West</b>	<b>Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar</b>
Town Meetings	4	-	2
Q & A Meetings	1	1	1
Public Budget Hearing	2	-	2
DMTDP Hearing	2	-	2
Citizen Policy Revision Clinic	3	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Field Data Provided by the GAIT Facilitators

### **3.1.0 Have services and advocacy provided by the CSOs to civil society changed for the better?**

#### **3.1.1 Advocacy/Effective Communication**

Table 3 (below) reveals that the CUs, which are an agglomeration of all CSOs in each town within the district, act as a focal point for awareness campaigns on issues that affect civil society. The CUs organize meetings on the understanding and the prevention of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis as well as on subjects such as domestic violence and education of the girl child among the Islamic community. These activities were much mentioned by the CSOs in the Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts and have attracted the required response from the DAs.

Another finding as depicted in Table 3 indicates that CUs can articulate the interests and priorities of members than before. In all three districts, articulation has gone beyond the group level to the community, and onto the district and national level through the Citizens Policy Review Clinics

where communities have opportunities in making their inputs to national bills. Particular reference can be made to the Information Bill and the Bill on Domestic Violence<sup>1</sup>.

"The training in advocacy and effective communication we received through GAIT has given us the capacity to be able to address negative cultural practices such as early marriages for Islamic girls and promote the education of the Moslem girl child, an issue which was taboo in the past." - *Alhaji Murtala Jima, Treasurer of the Dunkwa Civic Union in Upper Denkyira.*

On the group level for instance, the CU in Suhum organizes English lessons for female members to improve on their skills as public speakers. The CU in Dunkwa was also able to petition the DCE to stop the construction of a school building by a private firm due to their assertion that the contractor used inferior materials for the project. The petition was upheld by the DA after a fact finding exercise was conducted and the contractor admonished to use quality materials.

<b>Table 3: Major Outcomes of CBT on CSOs Identified by Respondents in the Three Districts</b>			
	<b>Upper Denkyira</b>	<b>Dangme West</b>	<b>Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar</b>
CSOs well Organized/Members Active	X	X	X
Increased Responsiveness of DA	X	-	X
Better Articulation of CSO/CU Interests	X	X	X
Women participation in LG improved	X	X	X
Improved Revenue Mobilization	X	X	X
Citizen understand workings of DAs	X	-	X

Source: Field Data Provided by the GAIT Facilitators

Data further reiterate the observation that differences in the institutional capacity and the outcomes identified cut across the three districts; In terms of the similarities, all three districts point to CSOs being well organized as a result of the leadership training. All three districts again mention better articulation of CSO/CU interests as a result of the training in communication skills.

In terms of the variations, Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar CSOs indicate that citizens appreciate the working of DAs, due to the training in Local Government System while Dangme West CSOs do not make such reference.

<b>Table 4: Major Outcomes of CPT on CSOs Identified by Respondents in the Three Districts</b>			
	<b>Upper Denkyira</b>	<b>Dangme West</b>	<b>Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar</b>
CSO-DA relationship improved	X	-	X
Service providers more responsible	X	-	X
Citizen input sought in budget preparation	X	X	X
Hearing is now regular	X	-	X
Members aware they can input into Bills before they are passed	X	X	X
Transparency improved	X	X	X

Source: Field Data Provided by the GAIT Facilitators

### **3.1.3 Budget Planning and Tracking**

All the selected CSOs in the districts mentioned that they are able to effectively participate in budget planning meetings organized by the DAs, as well as track the planned and actual revenue and expenditure of the assemblies. During the budget planning meetings, CSOs ensure that the interests of civil society are presented to the DAs for consideration.

### **3.1.4 Business Planning**

As a result of the training in business planning that the CSOs received under the GAIT project, for instance, CSOs in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District have organized and registered a business entity known as the Association of Civil Society Organizations (ASCO). ASCO presented a proposal and participated in a competitive bidding process through open tender recently and won the bid to run the District's newly constructed community centre. Till the first phase of the GAIT Project ended recently, ASCO rented an office for the GAIT Facilitator in the District.



### 3.1.5 General Service to the Community

Information elicited from the three districts alludes to improvements in general sanitary conditions in communities that result from the GAIT Project, compared to the period before the implementation of the Project. The CU in Suhum organizes a weekly clean-up exercise of the town, and civil society members have provided rubbish bins to the DAs to augment the efforts of the Assembly. At Dunkwa, the district capital of Upper Denkyira, the CU also organizes clean up campaign of the district hospital to the effect that last year the Dunkwa Government Hospital received a Certificate of Honor (see appendix) for being the best district hospital in the year 2003 in the Central Region of Ghana.

### 3.1.6 Women Empowerment

One can deduce from the various sessions with the CUs in Upper Denkyira, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar and Dangme West that as a result of the training women members received in leadership skills and effective communication, there has been an increase in the number of women taking up leadership positions in local politics. Our interactions with the groups revealed that before the GAIT Project, no female had assumed the role of Assemblywoman in the Dangme West District. In the New Ningo Sub - Civic Union, however, the vice chairperson of the Civic Union who is a woman, is plans to contest for a seat in the next LG elections. The increasing interest of women in leadership roles is also epitomized in Suhum in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District, where the chairperson of the Civic Union is a woman.

**“ Before going through GAIT training in leadership skills, we women were so timid and full of fear to speak out on our needs and priorities , but we now feel confident to participate in local politics to the extent that I am planning to contest for a seat in the next district assemblies “**

***Vice Chairperson of the New Ningo Sub – Civic Union in Dangme West District.***

### 3.1.7 Organization Skills and Resource Mobilization

The selected CSOs in the sampled districts were found to have the capacity to organize themselves into one group called the Civic Union to serve as an umbrella organization. This entity was also translated at the sub-district level in the form of sub-civic unions. In the Upper Denkyira District for example, the evaluation team interacted with the Association of Civil Society Organizations in Dunkwa as well as the Nankase and Oponso Sub-Civic Unions. With such a unified front, findings from the field showed that the CSOs gain more recognition from the DAs and opportunities are created for greater cooperation between the two. Such a recognition translate into the DAs creating credit facilities which the various CSOs and source. Credit is not extended to individual members of the CSOs due to problems of loan repayment.

It needs to be reiterated however that in all three districts, a certain degree of dissatisfaction was expressed by some CU members on the mechanism that runs the loan scheme. It was opined that though members met the prerequisites for the loans, the DAs did not respond to the various applications they put in. One member of the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar district administration, on the other hand, referred to the constraining nature of the District Assembly Common Fund and the inability of the DA to respond to the numerous applications they received. The official admitted in addition, the popular misconception among CSOs that one had to belong to a particular political party before a credit facility is awarded to an individual.

### **3.2.0 Have services provided by the DAs to CSOs and civil society been improved?**

Both District Assembly officials and CSO members in the evaluation area concurred that before the GAIT project, LG provided services without consultations, to the effect that the services provided were not in line with priorities and interests of the civil society. This situation, one could surmise, was a result of lack of capacity to understand the Local Government Act and principles of good governance.

At post-GAIT Project period the CSOs and DAs commented that the services provided by the latter have improved considerably. The improvement however varied from one district to the other, with high levels of improvement in the older GAIT district and low improvement levels in the Dangme West District.

The main areas of improvements are: 1) Communities are involved in budget drafting through their participation at the fee fixing meetings with the DA. 2) The award of loans from the common fund. 3) CSOs are members of bidding committees charged with selecting contractors for various projects. 4) Communities and CSOs are involved in projects implemented in their locations, just to mention a few.

Through the Poverty Alleviation Fund, a component of the District Common Fund (DCF) DAs have increased sanitation services, training in entrepreneurship, computer and dress-making skills to CSOs and civil society at large. DAs assist also the CSOs with and focus also on CIPs.

However, it needs noting that, feedback on the implemented project to communities and CSOs is not always forth-coming from the DAs.

### **3.3.0 Was the change in CSO services and advocacy a demonstrable result of change in the civil society institutional capacity?**

#### **3.3.1 CSOs**

Specific questions were asked on the role of CSOs and quality of services provided before and after the implementation of the GAIT Project in the districts. Data elicited from target respondents in all three districts and from content analysis of relevant document suggest a link between the strengthened institutional capacity of CSOs and the advocacy role they play and services they provide.

Table 5: Major Changes in Services Resulting from GAIT Project in the Three Districts			
Districts	Before GAIT	After GAIT	What Was Done
Upper Denkyira	Poor Sanitation	Improved Sanitation	Relocation of Public Dump Site Relocation of Public Toilets
Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar	Poor Sanitation	Improved Sanitation	Provision of Refuse Bins; Weekly Clean-up Campaigns
Dangme West	-		-

Source: Field Data

On the part CSOs, it was established that the GAIT-initiated training modules in Democracy and Governance, Strategic Planning, Leadership and Effective Communication, Financial Management, Education Budget Tacking, Proposal Writing and Women Empowerment have led to increased advocacy and articulation of interests of members, networking and mentoring, identification and training of Internal Resource Persons, the initiation of IGAs and the opening of bank accounts. At Dodowa in the Dangme West District, the Market Women Association were agitating a match on the DA to be covered by both print and electronic media, to press home a demand for the construction a new market that had been an issue for the past eight years. Association members had paid ₵ 100,000.00 each as a matching component to the DA for the construction of the market.

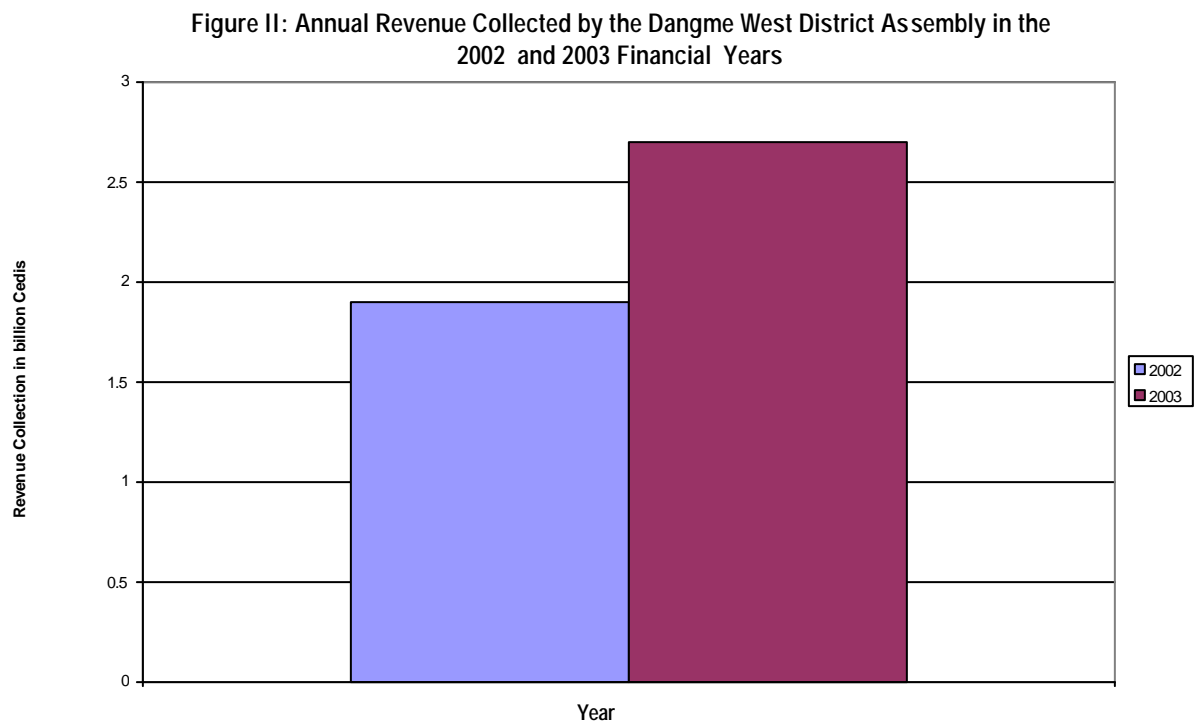
Another example of increased advocacy by CSOs resulting from institutional capacity strengthening is epitomized by the Civic Unions in Dunkwa in the Upper Denkyira District and Suhum, in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District on sanitation issues. Poor sanitation in Dunkwa had been compounded by the presence of a mounting rubbish dump in the centre of the town which the CU feared could lead to communicable diseases. Petitions were forwarded to the DA and the rubbish site was flattened and a new one allocated for the town.

Additionally, it could be surmised that the training skills that the CSOs and the CU acquired in Proposal Writing facilitated the CU in submitting and winning a bid to run the community centre in Suhum. The DA collaborated this and the contract is being prepared by the two parties for signing.

### 3.3.2 DAs

The causal nexus that has been established between improved service delivery by CSOs and the strengthening of their institutional capacity could be measured up to the performance of the DAs as well. One major result that was observed in all three evaluation districts was the registration of increased revenue mobilization over the past three years by the DAs. In Upper Denkyira, revenue collection was low and just about 50% of the target income was collected. By 2002, the DA had

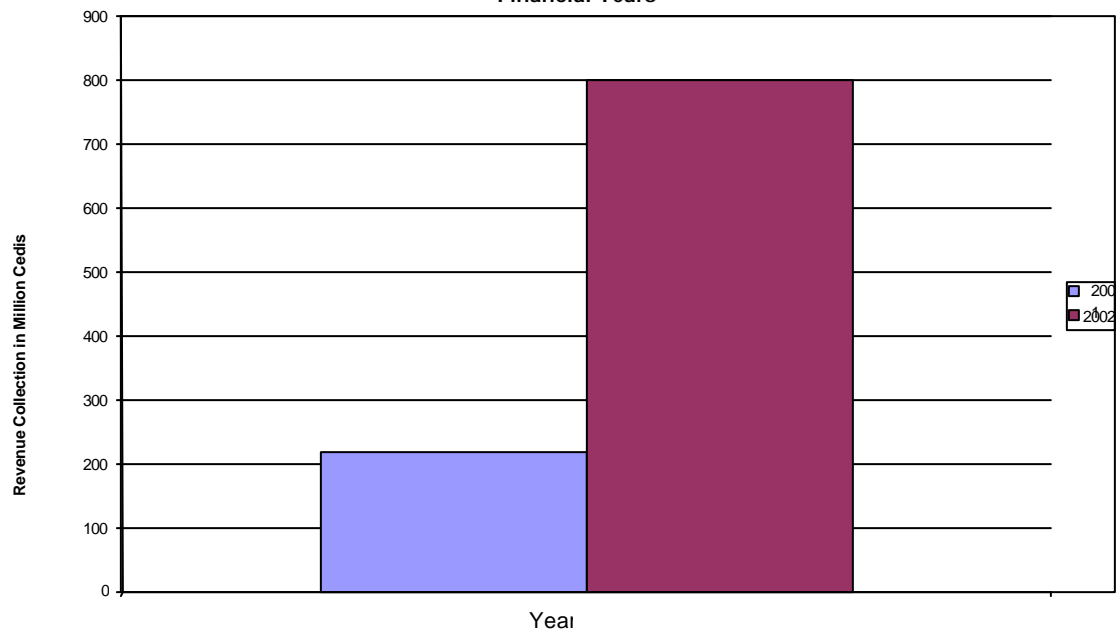
improved revenue collection from ₦ 218m to ₦ 800m, representing 70% of the revenue projected for collection<sup>2</sup>.



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<sup>2</sup> This was obtained from the interview with the DCE. Secondary sources were examined to validate this assertion.

**Figure 3: Annual Revenue Collected by the Upper Denkyira District Assembly in the 2001 and 2002 Financial Years**



**Table 6 : Percentage Change in Revenue Collection in Districts Before and After GAIT Project**

District	Revenue Before GAIT	Revenue After GAIT	Percentage Change (Annual)
Upper Denkyira	¢ 218 Million	¢ 800 Million	73%
Dangme West	¢1.9 Billion	¢ 2.7 Billion	30%
Suhum-Kraboaa-Coaltar <sup>3</sup>	-	-	-

Source: Field Data from the District Administration

### 3.4 Has local government improved on its responsiveness to issues advocated by CSOs and citizens?

Analysis of the data from both DAs and CSOs support the postulation that as a result of the implementation of the GIAT Project, the degree to which local government responds to issues put forward by civil society has improved. It should be reiterated however that district-wide variations pertain in this responsiveness. This variation as the findings suggest lend towards the length of the GAIT Project implementation in the three districts.

<sup>3</sup> Data from the DA was not available

Citizens have become more engaged with the DAs in community project implementation and monitoring. Though this can not be stated as a phenomenon in all three districts, specific reference could be made to a community in Upper Denkyira District which asked a contractor to discontinue a primary school project due to poor quality work. This action was reported to the DA and a technical expert provided to ascertain the claims of the community. To continue with the project, the contractor had to use high quality materials and show commitment to work.

Information sharing and accessible is another trait that suggests that the DAs response increasingly, to concerns and expectations of civil society. One of the three districts, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar, had a publicly displayed Revenue Performance Chart at the entrance to the administrative block. The Revenue Performance Chart announces monthly projection of revenues for the five urban and area councils that form the DA. Against each of the monthly projections of revenue are records of the actual collections. In addition to information sharing, the Revenue Performance Chart, invariably, points to the transparent character that the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar DA had adopted. The Revenue Performance Chart is new in the district since the implementation of the GAIT Project.



Figure iv: The Revenue Performance Chart at the District Assembly Office at Suhum in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District, as photographed during the fieldwork.

Though the Revenue Performance Chart was noticed only in the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar, all three districts revealed other mechanisms through which DAs shared relevant information with civil society. One key mechanism which DAs have used to improve on their responsiveness to CSOs is the Open Budget Hearing sessions.

### 3.5 Has there been an increase in citizen participation in local government?

Data from all three districts point to considerable increase in citizens' participation in local and national government and in the formulation of policies. With regards to policy formulation, through participation in civic activities at local levels, civil society is now able to make inputs into national policies. This is done through open-for-all discussions on subjects such as the Information Bill and the Domestic Violence Bill. Participation in the formulation of these two bills was much mentioned by the CUs in Upper Denkyira District and the Dangme West District.

Participation in Fee Fixing in the districts, according the field data, has become a norm. All the three CUs in the evaluation districts confirmed this finding. DAs engage CSOs to negotiate on levies before they are placed on them. The respondents revealed that their engagement with the DAs in setting fees has improved their understanding of the civic roles they play in the development of society. The roles of DAs in taxation and revenue collection are also better appreciated through the dialogues that take place.

In terms of priority setting of developmental needs, two out of the three districts indicated at the budget and strategic planning sessions, citizens are involved in directing their development needs and not necessarily taking up plans that are proposed by the DAs. The two are the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar and Upper Denkyira Districts.

### **3.6 Were mechanisms put in place to ensure the gains of the Project were sustained after GAIT was phased-out?**

It is evident that CSOs and DAs in the Upper Denkyira District, as well as the Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District, representing two of the three evaluation areas, have initiatives that are geared towards sustaining the gains of the GAIT Project. The sustainability drives are in the form of mobilization of financial resources through IGAs and the identification and training of IRPs.



Figure v : The oil palm extraction facility at Dunkwa that was built by the Civic Union, with support from the DA aims at providing subsidized services to members, while generating revenue in addition. (Source: Fieldwork)

Resources that are accrued from the IGAs are planned to meeting the financial commitments of the CSOs for instance, in sending members to participate in training programs, among others. In this direction, the sub-CU in Oponso in the Upper Denkyira District has embarked on farming activities that involve pineapple and mushroom growing, and the rearing of snails.

The IRPs are intended to be repository of knowledge and its subsequent transfer to other members of the CSOs.

In spite of the efforts by the CUs and CSOs to create an environment that ensures that the gains of the GAIT Project are maintained in its phase-out period, a number of shortfalls tend to frustrate such efforts. Non-availability of market linkages are one of such shortfalls that was identified by the Oponso sub-civic union for instance. The pineapples they cultivate for example, deteriorate on the farms when an immediate customer is not identified. There are other related problems such as difficulty in accessing credit facilities to improve upon farming methods as well as procuring fertilizers for instance to enhance produce.



Figure vi: The gari processing facility under construction at Oponso, Upper Denkyira District. This is an IGA that was initiated by the Queen Mothers' Association and the DA provided funds to procure the machinery. (Source: Fieldwork)



## **Chapter 4 : Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **4.0 Conclusions**

From the findings of the evaluation, it could be surmised that the length of implementation of the GAIT Project in the Upper Denkyira, Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar and Dangme West Districts determines the degree to which objectives of the project are met. A correlation thus can be established between increased institutional strengthening of CSOs in the older districts and improved participation of the CSOs in local government, for instance.

The vice versa is largely true in the Dangme West District where implementation of the GAIT Project began in 2003. In the Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts, where the Project started in 2001, the GAIT has been successful in the main and most of the objectives attained. CSOs articulate their concerns, initiate advocacy drives on the part of civil society and assume active participation in local government. On the part of local government, DAs assume roles and take up activities that suggest improvement in accountability and transparency in their transactions with civil society.

Other conclusions that highlight gaps that need to be addressed are as follows :

### **4.1 Project Sustainability after GAIT**

The findings reveal that project sustainability is likely in the three districts that were visited .The two CUs in the Upper Denkyira and Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar Districts showed great awareness of knowledge of the fact that there will be need for a mechanism to sustain the project financially as well as in terms of human resources when the GAIT project is phased out. This conclusion is premised on the evidence

found in Upper Denkyira where the CU has started projects in mushroom and snail farming for financial sustainability. In Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District the CU has formed a business entity called Association of Civil Society Organizations that has successfully won a tender to manage the newly constructed community centre as a business venture in order to raise funds for the sustainability of the project. In both districts, the members of the CSOs that have received capacity building in subjects such as leadership skills are now acting as trainer of trainers or Internal Resource Persons.

“We know where we came from and now that we know the benefits of our involvement in local governance administration, we are not going to let this opportunity slip through our hands but to consolidate our involvement in the decision making process of our district administration and the country as a whole”.

In the Dangme West District, although members of the CU generally displayed the expectation of the continued presence of the CLUSA GAIT facilitator, the Sub-Civic Union of New Ningo are in the planning stage of a business venture involving the hiring out of canopies, tents and chairs for events such as weddings and funerals for sustainability of the project. Although this idea is in a district which is in the early stages of implementation of the project, there is need for external assistance to strengthen the above mentioned activities.

#### **4.2 Role of GAIT Project Facilitator**

The findings also reveal that when GAIT is phased out, there would be a vacuum in terms of the GAIT facilitator who acts like a link for the continued engagement of civic unions in local governance on a day to day full time basis as well as looking at issues that affect CSOs, such as capacity building programs. The role and responsibility that come with this position should be envisaged voluntary, in spite of the fact that the CU should provide incentives for the continued performance of this office through any member who has the capacity to do so.

#### **4.3 Need for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Mechanism (CPMR)**

The findings also point to the need for CPMR in the project design of GAIT once it enters the next phase. One community in the Upper Denkyira District had not implemented any development project since 2002 due to conflict that exists between the Unit Committee<sup>4</sup> and Concern Citizens' Association.

#### **4.4 Political Commitment**

The evaluation findings also clearly showed that, the involvement of the political leadership of a district does make a significant contribution to the success of the project.

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<sup>4</sup>This structure is basic and found at the community or village level.

#### 4.1.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the fact that the project will now enter another phase as GAIT II, we would make the following recommendations:

- (a) CLUSA should include CPMR in the design of the next phase of the project which is about to start, especially in the community capacity building techniques, so that all sectors of the community are equipped with conflict prevention skills in order to work together in harmony.
- (b) CLUSA should provide technical assistance to the income generating activities which the CSOs have embarked on for sustainability of the project as well as sensitize the districts that have just started implementing the project on the need for mechanisms for sustainability of the project after GAIT . Such assistance could be provided through CLUSA's collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
- (c) The District Assemblies and CLUSA should assist the CUs and CSOs in general in developing marketing strategies and links to markets for the farm produce that the CSOs are producing for sustainability of the project. Collaboration in this direction could be hatched between the DAs, CLUSA and the Ghana Export Promotion Council.
- (d) The CUs, with assistance from CLUSA should develop a mechanism within their structure that seeks to fill the vacuum that would arise when the GAIT Facilitator leaves at the end of the project.
- (e) DCEs should invest increased commitment to the GAIT Project, ensuring that the gains of this project can be strengthened and maintained.



## Appendix A Simplified Scope of Work

<b>USIAD Project to be Evaluated:</b> Final Evaluation of the Government Accountability Improves Trust (GAIT) Project	<b>Initial and Final Funding Years:</b> 2001-2003 for Phase I of the Project. It has been extended for 18 months and ends in 2005
<b>Type of Evaluation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Facto/Impact	<b>Source and Amount of USAID Funding:</b> \$ 3, 057,858
<b>Purpose and Intended Uses of the Evaluation:</b>  The principal objective is to assess the degree to which institutional strengthening mechanisms influence CSOs in advocating issues that affect them to DAs and their participation in local government. The evaluation aims, also, to measure the response of government, in this case DAs, to issues advocated by CSOs and citizens at the local government level, resulting from the building the	

institutional capacity of the DAs. The results of the evaluation aim at focusing on the institution direction of the project which is now entering a second phase.

**Brief Description of Project and its Intended Results:**

GAIT is planned to increase the capacity of local CSOs to achieve their set objectives and to advocate the interest of their members to local government, It aims also to increase government responsiveness to citizens at the local level and promote accountability and transparency in District Assemblies.

GAIT is operational in 10 of Ghana's 110 districts and contracted to CLUSA (Cooperative League of the United States of America). The initial contract period was 2001-2003, but extended for 18 months.

**Evaluation Questions:**

- vii. Has the institutional capacity of CSOs and DAs changed since the implementation of the GAIT Project?
- viii. Have services provided by the CSOs to civil society, and advocacy changed for the better? Have services provided by the DAs to CSOs and civil society been improved?
- ix. Was the change in CSO services and advocacy a demonstrable result of change in the civil society institutional's capacity?
- x.

**B. Additional Questions to be Answered Specifically for this Project (Not more than 3)**

- i. Has local government improved on its responsiveness to issues advocated by CSOs and citizens?
- ii. Have DAs improved on their accountability and transparency?
- iii. Were mechanisms been put in place to ensure the gains of the Project were sustained after GAIT was phased-out?

**Evaluation Team:**

- Patrick Fosu-Siaw: Team Leader
- Brain Chigawa Presenter
- Pierre Achende Reporteur

The team is made up of a sociologist, lawyer and economist.

**Deliverables:**

- Evaluation Plan (methodology for data collection and analysis and GANT chart showing detailed schedule for all steps in the evaluation) – August 18 (Project questions and field work week) and August 20, 2004 – oral presentation and handouts on approach for answering evaluation questions and GANT chart.
- Draft Evaluation Report – October 6, 2004 by email to [mhageboeck@msi-inc.com](mailto:mhageboeck@msi-inc.com); [gausik@whoafrica.org](mailto:gausik@whoafrica.org); [jkerley@usaid.gov](mailto:jkerley@usaid.gov). Maximum of 20n pages, single spaced, 12 pt., plus annexes.
- Oral Evaluation Reports (PowerPoint of flip charts and handouts – October 18, 2004
- Final Evaluation Report – November 11, 2004 or earlier

**Evaluation Schedule and Logistics:**

- Identify the week during which the team will do its fieldwork for this evaluation and any relevant logistical arrangements, including country clearance.

**Evaluation Budget:**

- The evaluation course is not allowed to pay for USAID staff travel and the MEMS participant's travel is separately funded. Beyond this, what resources does the team anticipate it will need to carry out this evaluation?

**Appendix B**  
**Sample of Letter sent to the District Assemblies**

September 20, 2004

THE HON. DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
DANGBE WEST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY  
DODOWA

Dear Sir,

**PARTICIPATION IN FINAL EVALUATION OF USAID-FUNDED GAIT PROJECT**

Your district which participated in the USAID (United States Agency for International Development)-funded project, GAIT (Government Accountability Improves Trust), has been selected as part of the final evaluation of the project. The final evaluation forms part of a training program that aims at strengthening the institutional capacity of both Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations.

Per the methodology of the evaluation, your office could contribute information that is salient to the success of the evaluation. An interview has therefore been scheduled for September 29, 2004 at

USAID/Ghana

a	District Co-ord. Dir.		a														
b	Dep. District Co-ord. Dir.		b														
c	District Finance Officer		c														
d	District Planning Officer		d														
e	District Budget Officer/Analyst		e														
f	Local Government Inspector		f														
g	Presiding Member		g														
h	Other (specify)		h														

<b>C</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>																
C1	From your personal experience, to what extent has any or all of the following activities of the GAIT Program impacted on the work of the District Assembly ?																
	<b>Activity</b>		<b>Remark</b>														
a	Capacity Building/Training																
b	Citizen Participation Techniques																
c	Others																
C2	How would you describe the relationship between the District Assembly and the CSOs in the occasions indicated below?																
	<b>Occasion</b>		<b>Remark</b>														
a	Before GAIT																
b	Now																
C3	How would you describe the relationship between the District Assembly and the Civic Union/Sub Civic Unions in the occasions indicated below?																
	<b>Occasion</b>		<b>Remark</b>														
a	Before GAIT																



b	Now	
<b>D SUSTAINABILITY</b>		
D1	From D1a to D1g, please tick the training programmes you can facilitate. (Tick here )	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-right: 2px solid black; padding-right: 5px; text-align: center;">D 2</div> <div style="padding: 0 10px;">Please tick the CPTs the DA can sustain from the list below (Tick here )</div> <div style="border-left: 2px solid black; padding-left: 5px; text-align: center;">D 2</div> </div>
D1a	Citizen Participation in Local Government	D 2a Town Meetings
D1b	Financial Resources Mobilization	D 2b Q & A
D1c	Quality Service Improvement P	D 2c Budget Hearing
D1d	PPBS	D 2d MTDP Hearing
D1e	SCMP	D 2e CPRC
D1f	FMS	D 2f Information Sharing
D1g	None of the above	D 2g None of the above

## Appendix D Interview Guide

### Interview Guide

For measuring financial management practices

1. Organization utilizes accounting software system vs manual accounting
2. Budget tracking and financial information are provided to all implemented unit and stakeholders
3. Organizations has accounting manuals denoting key rules and procedures (payments, reimbursements, etc) in place
4. Key accounting manuals, rules and procedures (payments, reimbursements, etc) are followed.
5. Appropriate and adequate financial controls are implemented
6. Internal financial reviews are performed regularly and appropriately
7. Organizations financial system and procedures can be seen as being credible to donors
8. Governing body regularly reviews financial report/statement
9. Program activities are implemented according to annual budget

For measuring governance practices

1. Organization has a clearly articulated and comprehensive constitution
2. Organization follows constitution
3. Board member is appropriately representative
4. Leadership is appropriately selected

5. Organization has a strategy plan in place articulating vision, mission and organizational goal
6. Strategy plan is followed/implemented

#### Management system

1. Organization has key operational polices in place (travel, procurement, administrative.)
2. Organization follows key operational polices (travel, procurement, administrative.)
3. Decision taken during meeting are implemented
4. Organization has a monitoring and evaluation plan in place
5. Monitoring evaluation plan is followed/implemented.

#### Human resources practices

1. Recruitment polices and procedures in place
2. Recruitment polices and procedures are followed/implemented
3. Clearly defined job description exists for all key staff positions
4. Clearly established link exists between staff capacity and organization mission

#### For measuring Advocacy, Lobbying initiatives and responsiveness of the DAs

1. Number of AD decisions on community issues influenced by the project
2. Number of advocating actions played by NGOs and communities
3. Number of advocacy projects initiated and financed by communities.
4. Amount of raising funds from other partners allocated to advocacy.
5. Number of awareness sessions on community issues carried out by NGOs
6. Number of DA meetings involved community
7. Number of DAs members defined clearly their role and responsibility
8. Number of DAs members are able to point out more than two laws on decentralization
9. Number of Districts Authorities' decisions that has taken into account community suggestions and ideas

### **General questions to communities**

#### The Customer Satisfaction

1. Is the DA providing you the services and programs that you want and need?
2. How well is it doing in providing those services?

**Appendix E**  
**List of CSOs and CUs which participated in the Evaluation**

<b>Dangme West District</b>
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- i. Market Women Association
- ii. Ningo Prampram Advocacy Group
- iii. Lower Prampram Canoe Fishermen Association
- iv. Ghana National Association of Teachers

<b>Upper Denkyira District</b>
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- i. Concerned Citizens Association
- ii. Association of Civil Society Organizations
- iii. Ghana Hairdressers and Dressmakers Association
- iv. Kyekyewere Farmers' Association

<b>Suhum-Krabo-Coaltar District</b>
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- i. Coaltar Women Association
- ii. Union of Professional Photographers
- iii. Bisa Awurade Youth Association
- iv. Associations of CSOs

## Appendix F

### Schedule for Fieldwork

Work Schedule for the Final Evaluation of the GAIT Project				
Date	Destination	Activity	Time	Duration
26.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	Depart Accra	3:00 PM	N/A
27.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	Key Interview with DCE	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
27.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	Group Discussion with DA	10:15am	1.5 Hrs.
27.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	FGD with Selected CSO	01:00pm	1.5 Hrs.
27.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	FGD with Selected CSO	03:00pm	1.5 Hrs.
28.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	Community Discussion	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
28.09.04	Upper Denkyira District	Depart Upper Denkyira District	10:15am	N/A
28.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	Key Interview with DCE	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
28.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	Group Discussion with DA	10:15am	1.5 Hrs.
28.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	FGD with Selected CSO	01:00pm	1.5 Hrs.
29.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	FGD with Selected CSO	03:00pm	1.5 Hrs.
29.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	Community Discussion	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
29.09.04	Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	Depart Suhum Krabo-Coaltar	10:15am	N/A
29.09.04	West Dangbe District	Key Interview with DCE	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
29.09.04	West Dangbe District	Group Discussion with DA	10:15am	1.5 Hrs.
29.09.04	West Dangbe District	FGD with Selected CSO	01:00pm	1.5 Hrs.

30.09.04	West Dangbe District	FGD with Selected CSO	03:00pm	1.5 Hrs.
30.09.04	West Dangbe District	Community Discussion	8:30am	1.5 Hrs.
30.09.04	West Dangbe District	Depart West Dangbe District	10:15am	N/A
30.09.04	Accra	Meeting with CLUSA	01:00pm	2 Hrs.

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